

**DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA  
THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2015  
9:00 A.M.**

**Pursuant to the proper notification**, the Durham City Council held a special meeting on the above date and time in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Committee Room located at 101 City Hall Plaza with the following members present: Mayor William V. “Bill” Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cora Cole-McFadden and Council Members Eugene Brown, Diane Catotti, Eddie Davis, Don Moffitt and Steve Schewel. Absent: None.

Also present: City Manager Thomas J. Bonfield, City Attorney Patrick Baker and City Clerk D. Ann Gray.

Mayor Bell called the special meeting to order welcoming all in attendance.

**SUBJECT: DURHAM-ORANGE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT**

To receive a report from GoTriangle on the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit Project.

Mayor Bell stated the purpose of the item was to receive follow-up information from GoTriangle regarding the proposed station at Alston Avenue.

GoTriangle Representative Patrick McDonough noted that the discussion would be centered around the Durham-Orange Light Rail within the larger Durham Bus and Rail Investment Plan; details of the Alston Avenue Station work; and considerations for the Rail Operations and Maintenance Facility.

Mr. McDonough commented on the Durham Bus and Rail Investment Plan which was approved.

GoTriangle Representative Dave Charters provided a Powerpoint presentation commenting on the Alston Avenue Station as follows:

- In placing the light rail station west of Alston Avenue, GoTriangle evaluated the geography/physics of track location, financial considerations, and maintaining options four future extensions
- Each station site evaluated East of Alston Avenue: adds substantial cost and schedule risk; introduces additional challenges to directly serving NCCU campus with light rail; and shows no evidence of increased transit usage over West Alston site
- Site Constraints East of Alston Avenue
- Evaluated four concepts east of Alston in detail: 1) initial station; 2) initial station, shifted South; 3) initial station, shifted South, single-track; and 4) NC 147 station
- Benefits of NC 147 Station Concept
- Challenges of NC 147 Station Concept & Site Constraints
- Negatives of NC 147 Station Concept
- Benefits of Alston Avenue Station (West)
- Current Alston Station (West) Concept

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### Engineering Differentiators

#### Alston Avenue Station (West)

- Functional parking deck that meets UDO requirements
- Crossover/switch just west of station
- No aerial alignment
- Fewer residential relocations
- More-cost effective per FTA criteria to approve the project

#### NC 147 Station

- Parking deck infeasible
- Compromised operations due to crossover/switch placement
- Complex and costly aerial alignment

GoTriangle representatives referenced the extensive outreach and conversations regarding public input; noted there were concerns and a variety of opinions on the proposed location of the station on west side of Alston Avenue; and stated some citizens still desire station east of Alston Avenue; referenced serving minority residents; low income residents north and south; ridership comparison between station west of Alston and east of Alston/access mode; and station access.

Patrick McDonough stated regarding a question raised at a previous meeting “can we serve both NCCU and areas east of Alston with light rail” he noted collaboration was needed and small area planning with City, residents, community organizations, institutions including NCCU and Durham Tech to inform future decisions.

Discussion was held on the schedule risks on the east side of Alston Avenue; the size/number of spaces for proposed parking deck at the east side; west side stations including Dillard Street parking surface; dimensions on the station platform; bridge over Alston Avenue; exploring further with NCDOT to see if east side location could work; bus rapid transit serving NCCU; Go Triangle’s study/engineering that the light rail bridge not fitting between the DOT right-of-way and the parking deck; the challenges with the water tower absent the parking deck; the affordability for the east Durham residents; and better sidewalks and bike facilities in the area.

Mayor Bell referenced an additional opportunity scheduled for comments at the John Avery Boys & Girls Club; noted the significance of N. C. Railroad in the process; stated he was convinced that the staff had done all it could to have the station placed on the east side of Alston; stated this was not the final outcome; and asked the representatives of GoTriangle to continue to review comments raised by the Council.

Mayor Bell stated he was aware some people wanting the light rail to go east closer to the Research Triangle Park; and noted others felt that was the best stop; he stated what he had said to the staff at TTA - that he has always thought of this being a regional system connecting Durham, Orange and Wake. He stated another question he asked the staff “is this the right system for Durham” independent of what happens in Wake; independent of being able to go into the Research Triangle Park; and stated he had been assured that the 17 mile system was the right system for Durham and Orange.

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Patrick McDonough proceeded with the presentation on the Rail Operations and Maintenance Facility (ROMF) sharing illustrations of the Charlotte and Denver facilities and their uses.

The Council was briefed on the following five Rail Operations and Maintenance Facility sites in Durham which included the pros and cons; and issues that would need to be resolved.

- Leigh Village
- Patterson Place
- Alston Avenue
- Cornwallis Road
- Farrington Road

GoTriangle representatives also presented a summary of costs and schedule risks/impacts for the Alston, Cornwallis and Farrington ROMF sites.

#### The Rail Operations Maintenance Facility Next Steps

- Tour of Charlotte facility for elected officials and staff in June
- Additional public input at June public meetings
- Coordination with Planning staff on land use and zoning issues
- Coordination with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on water resources impacts/mitigation
- Coordination with NCDOT

City/County Planning Director Steve Medlin stated if the project was delivered to his office today based on the current structure of the UDO, they would need to classify it as a light industrial use which would require industrial zoning; and referenced the timeline for the planning department processes.

Discussion was held on neighborhood impacts; risks and potential expenses for the Alston Avenue site; the proposed tour of the Charlotte facility; rethinking and having further discussions to see if it was possible for the Alston Avenue site to work going east; and staff will provide the zoning classification for the ROMF sites in Charlotte and Denver.

Mayor Bell asked his colleagues to keep in mind, even though they would like to have the project go east of Alston Avenue; and if that was not feasible, he would not want the project to be killed; and the Council Members agreed.

Mayor Bell and Council Members thanked the GoTriangle representatives for the presentation.

#### **SUBJECT: SIDEWALK PROJECT DELIVERY AND PRIORITIZATION PRESENTATION**

To receive a presentation from the Departments of Transportation and Public Works concerning the delivery and prioritization of sidewalk projects.

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The staff shared a Powerpoint presentation on the Sidewalk Priorities “Present and Future.” The presentation described the project delivery process for sidewalk projects and components of the bicycle and pedestrian plans. The bicycle and pedestrian plans have guided investments of city, state, and federal funds over the past decade. It was noted in the staff report that bicycle and pedestrian improvements have played an important role in the revitalization of Durham’s downtown and neighborhoods. There are 13 active Public Works projects that have bicycle and pedestrian components, and over 30 future projects proposed for delivery by 2022.

The presentation discussed improvements to Durham’s bicycle and pedestrian environment since 2006. The DurhamWalks! Pedestrian Plan and Durham Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation Plan are almost 10 years old. The Transportation Department proposes that the FY 16 budget include funding for an update of both plans, as well as an additional Transportation Planner position. In addition, the presentation described both the need to update the plans, the goals of updating the plans, and the ability to deliver future infrastructure projects, including bicycle and pedestrian projects. The Transportation Department proposed that the current bicycle and pedestrian plans be combined into one updated plan that defines priority and networks for the next decade.

The presentation also referenced sidewalks completed since 2006; sidewalks under development; sidewalks funded and awaiting design; the status of unfunded sidewalks on the priority list; and bike lanes added since 2006.

The Mayor and Council thanked the administration for the report.

## **SUBJECT: U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REPORT**

To discuss the report provided by the U. S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center.

City Manager Bonfield stated the Department of Justice/Diagnostic Center made four recommendations for additional training and technical assistance to address violent crime and improve community police relations as follows:

- Enhance the work of the Violent Crime Reduction Roundtable by providing technical assistance through a neutral facilitator who will work with the Violent Crime Reduction Roundtable to create a strategic plan for addressing gun violence and gaining community-wide ownership of the problem and solutions.
- Build capacity to improve the police department’s communication with local media and increase transparency and community trust through technical assistance designed to define the work of the police department’s public information officer and integrate strategic communications into the department.
- Build capacity for police department to sustain proactive law enforcement strategies by leveraging peer-to-peer relationships with police departments that have successfully deployed model gun violence reduction programs and enhanced homicide investigative capacity.

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- Build capacity to expand community engagement and integrate community policing at all levels by leveraging peer-to-peer relationships with police departments that have successfully integrated community policing, collaboration and procedural justice training in the department; created a successful and ongoing relationship with the faith-based community.

Mr. Bonfield recommended that the City take advantage of the opportunities and stated the police department concurred as well.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden stated she was interested in the PACs and the role they had played with crime reduction; and how they could help facilitate reducing violent crime.

Deputy Chief Larry Smith noted each of the five PACS were started in the 1990s as part of the police department's community policing practices; to give each community some representation at the table with their law enforcement representatives to deal with the issue of crime. He stated currently the PACs have branched out into a little bit of everything; and stated a lot of the topics are not crime related.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden stated while it was good to include other information for citizens from time to time, work needed to be done to refocus the PAC groups.

Council Member Schewel asked the Police Chief for his thoughts on the report and the recommendations to pursue the technical assistance.

Police Chief Lopez stated the police department was always looking to enhance or better what they were doing. He stated "I think we do a good job ....we can do the best job if we continue to better ourselves and move forward." He stated he appreciated the work of the Department of Justice and noted if there was a better way, they would like to be a part of that.

Council Member Catotti raised concerns regarding the roles of the Durham Crime Cabinet and the Violent Crime Reduction Roundtable. She stated they have the Crime Cabinet; and asked do you broaden the Violent Crime Reduction initiatives; or do you fix the Crime Cabinet. She stated with both committees it appeared there was duplication.

Council Member Brown referenced some of the Crime Cabinet meetings being more meaningful than others; and stated that the Department of Justice did not say there were too many organizations involved in crime issues.

Regarding the different organizations in Durham involved with crime reduction; Mayor Bell stated he could also make the case that not having them, the City might have a lot more problems.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden suggested having all those involved with the PACs and other crime-related groups come together to have a discussion to understand what everybody was doing; which Council Member Catotti agreed with.

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**MOTION** by Council Member Schewel seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden to accept the offer from the Department of Justice to provide technical assistance to the Police Department was approved at 1:00 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor Bell, Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden and Council Members Brown, Catotti, Davis, Moffitt and Schewel. Noes: None. Absent: None.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the special meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

D. Ann Gray, MMC, NCCMC  
City Clerk